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the effort is worth the pains to see with what definiteness a number of fine lines, and white spots in the chickens can be brought together harmoniously, and those who find delight in rural things rejoice with the chickens in the cool brown earth.

While there are no landscapes in the exhibition of size, or that indicate any determination to see nature in any of those unwonted aspects that sometimes set everybody to re-adjusting his spectacles, there is plenty in the way of development in old by-paths that is refreshing and delightful. This is chiefly in the direction of poetical transcripts of nature of great simplicity in composition. Mr. J. Francis Murphy who contributes a group of works never accomplished more with slighter means. The sense of air and space in this year's work is as conspicuous as its delicate color. A comparatively new theme with him is a winter landscape, snow in the sunset, which glows like a jewel. Mr. Chas. Harry Eaton, Mr. Chas. Melville Dewey, Mr. D. W. Bunker, and conspicuously Mr. H. L. Ranger, must be numbered among this group.

Comment is not needed on Mr. Farrer's work which is numerous present, and repeats the tender sentiment of the twilight landscape he long ago made acceptable.

One of the most varied and successful contributions is Mr. W. H. Lippencott, with his foreign studies. Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith also gives the results of recent travel in a series of spirited sketches. It is worth noting that Mr. Arthur Quartley has found picturesqueness of something the same nature that seduces artists away from home in a group of houses, which, notwithstanding, their far away look resolve into American architecture. Surrounding these are fishing boats, and shallow water with reflections. The decorative quality of Mr. Quartley's works is each year more prominent, as is seen in the present exhibition in this picture, and in the group in the boat in a smaller work. In this respect, the fishing craft and figures of Mr. George Wharton Edwards, may be noticed.

The marines are for the most part thoroughly interesting if not striking. Mr. H. P. Smith's open sea, in its gentle aspect, appeals to every seafarer in its truthfulness. Mr. W. T. Richards drawing of the baffling wave, forms the poetical beach of Mr. F. K. M. Rhens. Mr. Harry Chase's low tide, and groups of fisher people are each works, if different in kind, yet in degree worthy attention.

There remains a host of names whose works would demand attention, if a recapitulation of them did not indicate not only their character, but the interest they lend to the exhibition. Among such are those of Mr. L. W. Wood, Mr. J. G. Brown, Mr. R. Swain Clifford, Mr. George Smillie, Mr. James Smillie, who indeed this season gives us not New England pastorals but the cliffs and farms of Etretat, and Mr. J. C. Nicoll.

The flower subjects are not as prominent as usual, but still the corridor blooms. Here are to be found the luxuriance of Mrs. Dillon's peonies, and the attractive composition which is always found in the work of Miss Agnes Abbott.

The etchings fill the two remaining rooms. A number of familiar pictures are introduced this year among the etchings. There is an attempt to render George Fuller's Nydia, which is successful in rendering the mystery of his work, but not its feeling of color. In this respect, there is an example of glow and warmth in A. H. Haig's Moorish Archway. Thos. Moran's etchings are conspicuous especially in the structural quality of the landscape. A new name whose work associates itself with his in manner, but has a poetical sentiment quite individual, is that of Alexander Schilling. Mr. J. Wells Champney's "Young Psyche" commends itself as a pleasing, graceful ideal, delicately given. The etching of Mr. Smedley's last year's work has been noticed, and Mr. Juenglings translation of Mr. Kappe's little sketch must be commended to attention. "The Hard Heart" of Mr. Church is also found in this room. There is also a series of poetical little studies by Matthew Maris, in an unfrequent vein.

THE framing of water colors is a distinct art from the framing of oils, but it is governed by the same rules of like to like, of course. The mat should be from two to three inches, and either white or gold. Any colored mat will impair the color of the picture. When a white mat is used, the frame should be of oak or some other plain wood with a gold strip. For powerful drawings the gold mat with a more or less elaborate gold frame, is appropriate. Frames are now made with a combination of polished oak with gilt ornaments which are admirably adapted to water colors.

THE THEATRE.

FIFTEEN years ago the man who had undertaken to study the American stage from the artistic and decorative standpoint would have wound up by committing suicide or going raving mad. He might have got fine art in the acting but none anywhere else, unless it were in the way one accessory was made to do duty for another, which it in no way whatever resembled. However, he can safely assume that task, and count on a monthly budget of variety and interest. When Mr. Augustin Daly began to dress his stage and his actresses to match at the old Fifth Avenue Theatre, he was the one manager in America whose taste had originality enough to rise above traditions. Now he has many rivals, and if they have not reached maturity yet they have learned so much that the future is radiant with the growing dawn of perfection in the setting of the play as well as the acting of its players.

TAKE the three leading events of the past month for instance; the Barrett engagement at the Star Theatre, the production of the "The Recruiting Officer" at Daly's, and of "Impulse" at Wallack's.

MR. BARRETT is the Henry Irving of the American stage. He is less a great actor than a great artist; his genius is that of the painter of times rather than of the actor of the men in them. The trouble with most actors, pure and simple, is that their sympathies are entirely dramatic, and they study their rôles for what is in them alone, without consideration of the life they are supposed to be a part of. They have no ideas outside the narrow limits of mere mummery. They simply develop a part, well or badly as it may be, and leave its settings to take care of themselves under the eye of the stage manager and the property man. When Edwin Forrest, during his last tour of the South, was told in Chattanooga that he would have to act without scenery, he answered: "It doesn't matter." To him it did not. He could act anywhere because he knew and felt his part, and he considered the performance of his part above all else, even of the play itself. But it mattered to the audience, to whom King Lear, ranting before a blue cotton curtain, presented no illusion of horror that the mad king should, raving amid the buffets of the storm. They heard Forrest but they also saw the curtain, and when no Forrest was on the stage there remained nothing to excuse the blank background.

It would scarcely be a compliment to either actor to say that Lawrence Barrett is not Edwin Forrest, but it is a compliment to Mr. Barrett to say that he is a different kind of a man. In him the instinct of the picturesque is keen and active; he appreciates fully the value of the illusions of the stage to the illusions of the play, and is exquisitely sensitive to the consistencies. A piano cover does not satisfy him for a toga, as it would have satisfied Forrest, because the knowledge of the fact that it is a piano cover shocks the artist in him. In Forrest's case the actor was supreme in his egotism and disdain of every part of the play he did not fill. What were his surroundings to his audience as long as he was on the stage? A great deal of the Forrestian egotism clings to Mr. Edwin Booth yet. During his recent successful season at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, he gave us tragedy and comedy as an excuse for the appearance of Edwin Booth. The mounting of his pieces was entirely inappropriate. He presented us not the plays but one player. Put any of his actors in his parts and the theatre would have remained empty. All his performances had to recommend them was Edwin Booth. But "The Blot on the Scutcheon," "The Kings Pleasure," "Francesca di Rimini," or "Julius Cæsar," with Mr. Barrett's place filled by a stranger, would still have been an interesting presentation, because the play was endowed with a certain picturesqueness and appropriateness irrespective of the performance of its chief part.

THIS proves that Mr. Booth is a greater actor than Mr. Barrett, but not as great an artist. Indeed, the true artistic instinct cannot be very acutely developed in a man who does not consider that vulgar makeshift and ridiculous surroundings reflect discredit on the play of which he is after all only a part, if even the chief one. A perfect picture must be perfect in all its parts. The fact is, Mr. Booth belongs to the past and Mr. Barrett to the present. The greatness of the one is purely

individual and will die with him, the greatness of the other is progressive and inventive, and will leave a permanent impression on our stage. It is the greatness of a man who thinks about plays as well as the parts he plays in them. Forrest, dead, is only a memory to us, and will be but a legend to our children. Macready, dead, lives still in the English stage which his intelligent and thoughtful genius redeemed from barbarism and set upon the road to work out its own artistic redemption.

A PLAY to be perfectly presented must have scenery, costumes, and accessories as well as actors. The story and the picture must belong together, and if they fail to agree in any parts the sensitive eye is shocked and the shock is communicated to the brain. The times have advanced since the days when our grandfathers shook the timbers of the Old Park Theatre with their applause. We have a wider knowledge of the arts and have grown into finer sympathy with them, and our stage must keep pace with the cravings of those who support it. Garrick could not play Macbeth to us in a tie wig, or Forrest give us King Lear before a blue cotton curtain. We would laugh at the one, as we laugh at Harry Dixey's burlesque of Irving, and find the performance of the other very dull. And we would have a right to do so. What is a play if not a consistent representation of some phase or event of a certain time and place? Who would not laugh at a picture of the crucifixion located in the Five Points instead of Jerusalem? Yet the player who gives us Roman plays with the settings of French melodramas demands that we shall be satisfied.

"THE RECRUITING OFFICER" is one of those delicious performances with which the cup of refreshment Mr. Daly fills for the public so often bubbles over. It has the airy gayety and sparkling brilliancy of a water color by Leloir. In scenery, costuming, and acting it belongs among the best bits of dramatic sketching of our time. Mr. Daly has, to judge from his costumes, advanced the period of the play somewhat, for Farquhar died in 1707 and "The Recruiting Officer" was produced the year before. The period must, then, have antedated that which the dressing Mr. Daly gives it suggests. But after all the costuming is coherent and the play is not a history, so, as it hangs together so well, we can afford to dismiss the question of date and take it for what it is.

I CONSIDER, by the way, that Mr. Daly has the best scenic artist, in the higher artistic sense, in America. Mr. Roberts paints with wonderful delicacy and feeling, and though he never produces stupendous effects rarely fails to give out results beautiful in themselves and harmonious with the play and the people in it. The fault with the average scenic artist is that his work overtops the actors. They ease themselves in the scenery. This want of delicacy, or excessive strength of painting, whichever way you may take it, might be modified by a discreet manipulation of the side and border lights, but it could not be entirely obviated. In a general way one may say that all scenery is too strongly painted with us. Even Mr. Barrett's recent plays were marred by this defect. Mr. Irving's scenery is very quiet in color treatment, and the stage lights are kept down with the most delicate skill. The result is a picture admirable in tone and harmony, in which you see the scenery as a background to the play, not the actors as pigmies dwarfed by their surroundings. Such a picture is not, perhaps, as striking as a blaze of colors and a dazzle of lights, and it is more lasting. It grows on you, while you see all of the other at once and forget it quite as quickly.

WHAT *Puck* and *Life* are to our periodical literature, Messrs. Harrigan and Hart are to our stage, with a leaning in favor of *Puck*, whose humor has a good deal of their unctuousness and breadth. Since they were burned out of their pretty theatre, they have been coining money enough to build a new one in the most hideous barn in town. The New Park Theatre is a theatre only in name. The New Standard, on the contrary, is as pretty a little house as I know of, bright and airy in decoration, with a good auditorium and an excellent stage. But it is an old and a true saw that you cannot make a silk purse out of—anything but silk, and the only way to make a theatre is to build it from the ground up. You can never adapt a stable or a church and make it look like anything but the nondescript it is.